

Governor's Office Daily COVID-19 Q & A

March 31, 2020

Helplines and Webpages

General Resources: visit coronavirus.illinois.gov

PPE Equipment:

- Donations: PPE.donations@Illinois.gov
- To Manufacture PPE in Illinois: ima@ima-net.org

Business Assistance:

- Essential Business inquiries: contact 1-800-252-2923 or CEO.support@illinois.gov
- IL Small Business Assistance: email CEO.support@illinois.gov (DCEO) or **click here.**
- Federal Small Business loans visit: <https://disasterloan.sba.gov>.
- Business insurance coverage: <https://mc.insurance.illinois.gov/messagecenter.nsf>.

Individual Assistance:

- Employee workplace concerns contact the Attorney General's Workplace Rights Bureau at (844) 740-5076 or submit a complaint **online.**
- Unemployment insurance eligibility and the application process call Claimant Services at (800) 244-5631.
- If you feel sick or are concerned about infection visit DPH website, **click here.**
- Resources for people with disabilities, please visit www.DDD.Illinois.gov.

Other Resources:

- For a list of all Executive Orders related to COVID-19 please **click here.**
- For Illinois taxpayer information, please visit DOR's **resource page here.**
- IDFPR list of licensees and consumers impacted by COVID-19 visit: <https://www.idfpr.com/COVID-19.asp>
- School related inquiries visit <https://www.isbe.net/covid19>
- COVID19 cases by county: visit dph.illinois.gov
- To volunteer: visit serve.illinois.gov or email dph.serveillinois@illinois.gov
- Emergency Day Care Provider Search: visit <https://emergencycare.inccrra.org>

Medical

Q: Are Ambulatory Surgical Treatment Centers covered by the IDPH guidance to cease elective surgeries and provide their PPE to COVID-19 healthcare facilities? If so, is there any monitoring or enforcement?

A: All health and medial entities have been instructed to cease elective surgeries. If you have questions about whether a business is violating the Stay at Home Order by not allowing for safe social distancing or that it is not maintaining a safe and sanitary work environment to minimize the risk of spread of COVID-19, please contact the Workplace Rights Bureau of the Illinois Attorney General's Office at [844-740-5076](tel:844-740-5076) or workplacerrights@atg.state.il.us.

Q: Can a person get infected from a dog after an infected groomer grooms the pet?

A: At this time, the Centers for Disease Control and Protection (CDC) believes there is no evidence that pets can become sick with or spread COVID-19. There is also no evidence that the virus that causes COVID-19 can spread to people from the skin or fur of companion animals. However, since animals can spread other diseases to people, it's always a good idea to practice healthy habits around pets and other animals, such as washing your hands and maintaining good hygiene. For more information, visit the CDC's page on guidance for those with pets: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/faq.html#COVID19animals>.

Q: Where should those without a primary health care provider, doctor, etc. or those with limited access to clinics in their community call for guidance?

A: Individuals should contact their county or local health department for guidance. Please review for the IDPH map for [reference](#).

For persons in cook county, , the following is a link to Cook County Health clinics by location: <https://cookcountyhealth.org/our-locations/>

Telehealth

Q: Illinois Early Intervention (EI) program physical therapists and developmental therapists have not been allowed to start telehealth visits with their children, although the Governor has approved telehealth for Medicaid patients following the lead of many private health insurance companies. What is being done about this?

A: The Department of Human Services (DHS) is working to allow EI services to be delivered via telehealth, but it is a very comprehensive and time-consuming process for both DHS and the Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) to implement; plans must meet all necessary federal and state guidelines. The Bureau acknowledges the recent posting of some HIPAA compliance lenience but is still working through the Office of Special Education Programs regarding federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) compliance.

DHS and HFS are currently working to:

1. Allow time for HFS to develop teletherapy codes for EI,
2. Nail down our policies and procedures for telehealth,
3. Develop a training module,
4. Test the technology platform that has been identified,
5. Figure out payment structure for the company that owns the technology platform.

New developments are happening every day– please encourage residents) to continue to watch for updates on the EI Provider Connections and other EI Partners [websites](#).

Hospital and Clinic Financial Relief

Q: What is being done to provide support for community health clinics that address the volume of potential patients, and help prevent the hospitals from getting overrun?

A: The federal CARES package provides \$100 billion in relief for hospitals and \$1.6 billion for community health clinics. The stimulus package would also delay and reduce payroll tax

payments by 50 percent for employers, including hospitals and health systems. The fund amount allocated specifically for Illinois are not available yet.

K-12

Q: Is there additional funding that can be available for K-12 schools with a high volume of low-income students that have much lower access to the internet and technological devices?

A: Illinois is expected to receive approximately \$569 million from the Elementary and Secondary School Emergency Relief fund in the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act. School districts may use this funding to purchase educational technology to support online learning. School districts are currently utilizing local resources to equip students with the tools and support they need to engage in remote learning activities. For example, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) provided 100,000 laptops, Chromebooks and iPads to students. ISBE is working with the Governor's Office to explore opportunities within the philanthropic community and the private sector to supplement local efforts to meet students' technology needs.

Illinois Department of Corrections

Q: What steps is the Illinois Department of Corrections (DOC) taking regarding compassionate release, and a review of all elderly or infirm, with an eye toward providing a number of medical furloughs?

A: DOC is working with the Governor's Office and Prisoner Review Board to thoroughly review all individuals who are eligible for early release. DOC is reviewing those who are incarcerated for low-level offenses who are either age 55 or older, eligible for earned discretionary sentence credit, or eligible for restoration of sentence credit. DOC is also prioritizing individuals who are pregnant, postpartum, terminally ill, ill, in an Adult Transition Center, or in the Moms and Babies program.

Q: Will the DOC make communications from Illinois prisons free to the families of the incarcerated during this COVID19 pandemic?

A: DOC provided \$4.15 to each person in custody for two free 20-minute phone calls and one 15-minute video visit. The total cost was approximately \$159,000. In addition, Global Tel Link (GTL) is providing each individual with one free 15-minute video visit per week for 12 weeks, four free electronic message vouchers per week for four weeks, and free games for 60 days for tablet owners.

Q: Can the Governor further convey measures being taken to protect corrections employees who are not different than "first responders" taking care of patients who may be ill at minimum during the transfer process?

A: All staff who work with individuals in isolation and quarantine, as well as in the healthcare unit, are wearing full personal protective equipment (PPE). In addition, all staff are having their temperature checked daily as they enter the facility. At the Stateville Correctional Center, staff who are not working with individuals in isolation, quarantine, or in the healthcare unit, are wearing PPE. We are reviewing our inventory levels to determine whether staff statewide can be provided with a surgical mask and gloves each day for the next 30-days.

Insurance

Q: Is there any way to change the disability insurance rules or make exceptions?

A: Disability income insurance policies vary so policyholders should reach out to their insurer to determine coverage.

Q: What resources are available for those who cannot pay for their healthcare premiums?

A: If a person cannot pay their premium because of a loss of job, this qualifies as a “qualifying event.” Meaning, they can enroll for different care on healthcare.gov. If the person loses their job and cannot afford marketplace coverage, they might be eligible to qualify for Medicaid. Medicaid does not have an enrollment period and an individual can apply whenever appropriate. Enrollees should reach out to their insurer directly to see what options their insurer may be offering in terms of relief.

Consumer Protection

Q: What advice is there for those currently unemployed due to COVID-19, who are approached by collection agencies?

A: Consumer should have that conversation with their debt collectors. For additional guidance, please review the following [link](#).

Unemployment

Q: How is IDES modifying its system to reflect the federal stimulus packet?

A: The Department of Employment Security released a set of Q&A to address the public’s questions. To view the release, [click here](#).

Q: If a health care organization that is a “Reimbursable Employer” furloughs employees, including high income employees like medical staff, exactly how would the IDES rules apply? For example, if they reduce the hours of a physician, who normally earns \$150,000 per year, by 50%, such that the physician will be earning at a rate of \$75,000 per year, will that physician's income at 50% place them above the "cap" such that they are ineligible for Unemployment Compensation?

A: In this case, the individual would still earn over the weekly benefit amount and would not qualify for benefits.

Tax

Q: Is there an extension for an organization's Exemption (E) number?

A: The Department of Revenue automatically applied a 90-day extension of an organization's Exemption (E) Number if it expired 60 days before or 60 days after the "Stay at Home" order was issued. For more information, [click here](#).

Q: Are there plans for the Illinois Department of Revenue to extend the estimated income tax payments?

A: At this time, there are no plans to extend the estimated income tax payments. Illinois' relief is different than Federal relief as it pertains to estimated payments in that while current Illinois law provides for the extension of the deadline to file and pay income taxes if the Federal government does so, Illinois law does not extend this treatment to the payment of quarterly estimated payments.